The COMMONWEAL

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Editors: EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
PHILIP BURNHAM (*now on duty with the armed forces*)

HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor*; MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor*; C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor*; JOHN C. CORT, *Associate Editor*; JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager*

Tarring with the Fascist Brush

PORTUGAL'S change from neutrality to non-belligerence, with the consequent availability of the Azores for an Allied anti-submarine base, sprang from perfectly natural causes and not from generosity or love of democracy on the part of the Portuguese government. Portugal is a small and poor country. She could not dream of defending herself against any one of the larger nations of Europe, let alone a coalition of several of them. So long as Germany was in the ascendant she had to be extremely "correct" in everything she did, and even show Germany a certain partiality; this would have been true regardless of what form of government she might have had. It was true of Portugal under a dictatorship just as it was true of Switzerland and Sweden under democratic régimes. In Portugal's case, the situation was made even more difficult because certain Spanish elements have always been "Pan Iberian," that is, have always felt the whole peninsula should be governed from Madrid. When the fortunes of war began to change, it became possible once again to revert to the policy of friendship for England—a policy geographically logical and rooted in centuries of established practice.

This is all obvious enough, yet the announcement of Portugal's change of attitude brought forth in the ultra-democratic press, notably in New York's *PM*, howls of denunciation directed against Premier Salazar, who was written off as a nasty fascist, in the same class as Hitler, Mussolini and Franco. To this we feel it necessary to take exception. We have never looked upon Salazar as the embodiment of political wisdom or virtue, setting an example in his régime to which we should all pay heed, which is precisely the way some English and American writers have chosen to depict him. He is a dictator, and he has on occasion arbitrarily used force to maintain himself. We never have liked his government and do not like it now. But this is very different from putting it in the same category as Hitler's or Mussolini's.

For one thing, the government Salazar's régime replaced was a very corrupt and debased form of democracy, riddled with graft and financially bankrupt. Salazar, far from leading a movement against that corrupt democracy, was called into government by a military junta, because of his special financial skill and knowledge. He insisted on a free hand, and after resigning once because of political meddling, got it. He proceeded to do a great many good things—good things for Portugal, though admittedly they were done by tyrannous means. He put the State on a sound budgetary basis. He instituted economic reforms calculated to relieve somewhat the abject destitution of the people. What is more, he did not completely suppress freedom of speech. And, most important of all, he continued to be, personally, a man of the highest integrity. So far as we know, however much he may have borrowed from the technique of Mussolini and Hitler, he never borrowed their expansionism or imperialism.

An apologist for Salazar could point to a relatively clean record and considerable positive achievement. We should still not like his system, but we should have to admit that it is not a thing to arouse bitterness, to violate every feeling of human decency. And it is important that distinctions like these be made and regarded, for otherwise we are likely to turn democracy into an ideology, into a tyranny, into something which will arouse in others just as much hatred and scorn as fascism now arouses in us.

Freedom of Enterprise

TWO well-known gentlemen spoke up on the subject of American business during the past week. Senator O'Mahoney, back from a junket along the Pacific Coast on behalf of the Senate's committee on post-war economic policy and planning, took up the cudgels against monopoly. His remarks were along Administration lines. He would protect genuinely competitive private enterprise through patent and cartel reform, the supplanting of indulgent state charters by federal incorpora-

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tion of business, incentive taxation and the like.

Wendell Willkie attacking the Administration in his St. Louis speech had somewhat similar sentiments. He was vaguer, of course, as to steps that should be taken but demanded a society that was "completely competitive" to bring about a rapidly enough expanding production "to absorb the unleashed energies of all our people." Another descriptive phrase: "unregimented economic society." To rugged individualists this has a pleasing sound, but Mr. Willkie in his remarks about labor, farming, monopolies and social security shows that he has gone beyond that.

To "freedom of enterprise" there must be many limitations. Where services rendered are a natural monopoly, they should be publicly owned and operated or so stringently regulated that the public is sure of unremitting protection. Since under "free enterprise" nothing succeeds like monopoly, artificial monopolies should be broken up. Cooperative buying and selling should have every encouragement. Labor must attain an increasingly important rôle in ownership and management. And public works plus social security through government has to take up the slack wherever necessary. Under such conditions the extent of "freedom of enterprise" is relatively unimportant; freedom from want and freedom from fear for the individual family come first.

Foreign Policy: the Choice

SELDOM has the United States faced a brief period of greater moment for our foreign policy. The opening of the Moscow conference and the Senate debates on the post-war resolution are simultaneous. Yet whatever is said in Washington debate, whatever the final vote and whatever seeps out to the public from the Hull-Eden-Molotov discussions, it would seem that there are only two real possibilities: imperialism or genuine international cooperation.

The first of these has many facets. It would stress our retention and building up of strategic bases throughout the world. It would certainly imply also the maintenance of a peacetime army, navy and air force of staggering proportions. Yet even with our manpower and productive capacity we could not keep the peace by ourselves alone. We should have to seek out one or two other big Powers, the British Empire and/or Russia to make certain to hold down the lid.

Such an attempt to enforce the peace would have certain advantages. It would be sure and definite and as efficient as any dictatorship. It might even be benevolent and for a time at least decide all issues with the interests of the peoples in mind; it might even reorganize things in a comparatively disinterested fashion. And such a policy would enjoy the wide support of American isolationists, whose hopes of simply tilling their own backyards have been forever shattered by the modern bombing plane. Hence a natural reaction to their disappointment is to determine to wield such military might that no one outside can ever again involve our country in a war.

Among the disadvantages of this course would be the difficulty of holding down the lid against the resentment of the world's subject peoples. One of the elements that is delaying United Nations victory in this war is, in fact, the suspicion of the Italians, various Balkan peoples, Chinese, French, Malayans, Indians and East Indians that we have no intention of making a genuine people's peace. Our long silence in the matter merely reinforces German and Japanese propaganda. And so the danger that we may seek an imperialist solution grievously delays our military victory.

The second solution also has many drawbacks, the chief of which is its difficulty of achievement. But it accords far closer with the present aspirations of the war-beset American people—not to mention the people of Britain, Russia and China, as well as those who under imperialism would have inferior status. The steps in establishing genuine international cooperation in the world remain undefined. Perhaps a federation would begin by a system of nuclear alliances among the United Nations; perhaps it would come into being as the result of some sort of international constituent assembly; or perhaps the League of Nations itself might take on new life. The aim must be formulated and proclaimed before methods can be agreed upon. There must be an unequivocal choice between Anglo-American etc. imperialism and a world organization truly representative of every people.

Combat Zone

THERE was the talk which preceded action and then the talk which accompanied action, and now action is all alone and silence surrounds the action of our soldiers who are in another world from our world, isolated in a world of action, absorbed and concentrated in action which remains apart from us who are at home. No reports from the battlefield bridge the gap. The photographs show the mountains and the valleys, the rivers and the cities. They show the soldiers advancing along the roads to the attack, the soldiers in the attack, the bursts of explosives, the burning port, the soldiers in the orchards, the farm house marked by gun fire, the soldiers at rest, the soldiers dead. We have a documentation for every front. The planes in combat and bombing, the white turmoil of the waters about the submarine which has been struck, the guns firing from the battleship. We know the faces of the generals, the faces of the privates. But no matter what we know, we know only that there is the front and

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then everything that is not the front; there is the action of combat, and then everything that is not the action of combat: no matter what we are shown we are shown only the unbridgeable gap between the soldier in action and anyone who is not in action.

We know more about the zone of action than any people in any country have ever known before about the zone of action into which have passed their soldiers. But the more we know, the more we are certain that American soldiers have left America and that there is no way by which we can be with them. It is not simply that they have left America; that they are, for example, in Italy: they have left Italy also, they have left everything that we know of Italy—everything which in Italy resembles a field, a road, a house (an American field, an American road, an American house)—they have left Italy for a landscape which is not an Italian landscape (an American landscape) because it is the landscape of shellfire, the landscape of combat, the landscape of war.

None of us who are at home can walk in this landscape.

It has always been that way. A soldier would come back from Britain, from Gaul, to his people in Rome; he would tell about the roads he had built, the camps at intervals along the roads, what the country looked like and perhaps he would tell about the fighting—but this would be a year after it was all over. The people in Rome would never even pretend that they had been with him, in their hearts, in any immediate awareness, while he had fought in Gaul. Some of the men who had seen Moscow burn, who had crossed the Berezina, returned to France; they would try to tell what it had been like but no one who had remained in the villages of France would even pretend to have traveled with these soldiers through the Russian plains. It was that way in the last war. There was the front and then, a few miles back, even within hearing of the guns at the front, it was something entirely different. Men went up and men came back, but to those who remained at home no love, no information, no photographs ever permitted them to accompany the soldiers into the zone of action. It is always the same thing, for the soldier, the sailor, it prepares the ancient legend, the return of the sailor to his wife and she does not recognize him.

The soldiers stood in line at the induction centers; they stood naked in line and then they became other men; they put on other garments and passed from one zone to another until they entered the zone of silence, the zone of combat. They heard the news, the speeches and the talk as the country entered the war. Gradually they withdrew from all these sounds. There were the camps, the flying schools and in them already the rumor of America was less audible. The trains left the village station, the city terminals, the ships spoke gravely as they sailed in the night, the bombers flew across the seas: then the soldiers who left America heard no longer the sounds of America.

That is the way it has always been when soldiers have gone to war; there has always been this separation which is not measured by distance; the soldiers have always gone into a world where we cannot follow them.

The letter which we print on this page comes to us from that world to which we have no access. It is from a man who stepped for a moment to the outer margin of that world in order to speak to us. When he had spoken he returned to the zone where we cannot follow him. C. G. PAULDING.

Letter to His Mother from a Flier

I JUST received your letter dated August 12 with the clipping by Steinbeck in it. I read it and reread it and think it may be the start of something. Everybody realizes what a tremendous job the leaders of the post war period are going to have, but it seems that by now at least the outlines of a plan must have been conceived. We over here think that we are the ones who should first give an opinion on it. It seems only natural that those who stayed at home might, in drawing up the plans, treat as secondary what to all of us is foremost—let there be no more wars. My past two missions were really hell. In the last one especially there were eight minutes more terrifying than I ever dreamed anything could be. Now if I thought that I was going through that only to have my sons go through the same thing in another quarter of a century, I frankly don't think I would go on. It seems to me there must be some answer. Whether it lies in religion or some forms of government that we have been so used to calling utopias and impracticable I don't know, but I do know there is an answer. The very fact that it is all so against human nature makes me certain that everlasting peace is not just talk. Millions of young men are throwing away the very prime of their life and hating every minute of it. With my youth and inexperience I don't expect to find the answer, but I'll try, and if everybody does the same, it can't help but turn up. Perhaps complicated ideas and theories are only blinding us and the real solution lies in simplicity —I don't know.

My sixth mission was even rougher than my fifth. Some of the boys don't like to write home about the missions, but I know you want to know just what your children are doing and will feel better in knowing the truth. I can't describe how it feels to see that flak bursting so close you can reach out and hang your hat on it, but frankly it just scares the living daylights out of me. With seventeen holes the last two missions and nobody hurt, I'm beginning to feel they just can't knock us down. I've seen the worst now and I'm going up again, so that's all I wanted to know. Don't think me brave or be proud of me because I'm not brave.

It's time to eat now, I'll write again soon.

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Poem For My Daughter

Jesse Stuart

1

This life that we created stirs in dreams
Tonight while floods of cold November rains
Charge down these rugged slopes in roaring streams,
And rain drops slither on our window panes.
This life that we created stirs beneath
Her quilt as if she were percoon in spring
About to burst from earth's warm loamy sheath
Into clean wind and sun where wild birds sing.
She brings pink mouse-paw hands from under cover
While her curved lips are spread in childish laughter
At songs of storm-filled streamlets running over
Of dashing, splashing, cold gray autumn water!
These moods of mountains are a part of her,
Moods through eternal years that have been ours;
Too young to know, she laughs at little fear
In love with storm-moods in her cradle hours.

2

Not only daughter of two worlds of flesh
But she is daughter of the new ground furrow,
And daughter of the willow, oak and ash
And sawbriar clusters where the ground squirrels burrow.
Not only daughter of two worlds of blood
But she is daughter of the percoon petal
That waves in April wind in gleeful mood—
I think she is made of the percoon metal.
I know she's daughter of this mountain earth
For she was born with April in her eyes;
Her blood is of the land that gave her birth,
Her moods, the moods of wind and wild bird cries.
I know she is the daughter of these things
And I am not concerned with prophecies
To say in her are moods of many springs
And that she is as perfect as the leaves.

3

While we keep vigil of this infant daughter
Through lightning whips and cannonading thunder,
Through lamentations of the wind and water,
I think of families now torn asunder,
Scattered and lost on roads with evil turning
While we sit safely here behind log walls
In warmth reflected from our wood fire's burning,
Safe from the wind and rain that sadly falls.
I think of quails that nest among the sedges
Hovering their fledglings through the storm;
I think of parent foxes guarding ledges
To keep their wayward young from hunter's harm.
Never before have I felt parent ties,
That comforts of a home can mean this much;
When not a parent, my roof was the skies
And homes were houses without living touch.

4

Let her moods be the moods of blowing wind
That in this autumn rends the trees asunder;
Let her moods be the cooing doves that wend
To sheltering pines amid the roar of thunder.
Let her know winter moods so desolate
Of preening snow against leaf-littered ground,
Of plaintive bird confiding to his mate
And murmur of cool water underground.
Let her know flippant moods of mountain spring
That lift new tender blossoms from decay;
Let her know music of runlets that sing
With wind-blue water under dogwood spray.
These moods are musical to be instilled
In her small infant heart and plastic brain;
And let this tender world of flesh be filled
With clean imagination of the rain.

5

Let her know rugged beauty inwardly,
Not artificial beauty second-hand;
Let her be free as mountain wind is free
To know, observe, and love her native land.
Let her touch rugged bark of sister trees,
Pull percoon petals and tear them apart
To feel and see the beauty that's in these
To make food for her growing brain and heart.
Let her know mandrake and the sawbriar tendril
And wild sweet-williams blooming in the cove;
And let her have strong legs to climb the hill
And let her have a heart and brain to love.
Let her blow milkweed furze across the meadow
And course each runlet to the valley stream;
Let her run for a spring cloud's shifting shadow—
Give her the world and time wherein to dream.

6

I must be careful not to break her slumber
With brogan steps upon this knotty floor;
She must sleep through this storm night of November,
Sleep soundly to the music of its roar.
Too soon she'll know of greater storms than this
When she must be awake to know of life;
She must sleep now, know warmth and love and kiss
Before the days of work and dream and strife.
Her tender hands must clutch more than the wind
In days to come of living growth and dream;

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Too many bookish facts will fill her mind,
Too much to see beyond this hollow's rim.
I know that sleep is good for infant rest,
This peaceful capsule of eternity;
I know that rest for her will be the best
Until she leaves this brittle infancy.

7

Rest now, young brain, for dreams will break too soon
And shatter on your world like slivered glass;
These dreams will be as mists beneath the moon
And lonely as winds muffling autumn grass.
I speak to you of dreams since I've known dreams
And blood that flows in you has flowed in me;
I must warn you dreams are dead flower stems
And sap that comes each season with the tree.
Rest now, for you have years of life to face
And many paths to walk beneath the sun;
You'll know the joy and sting of love's embrace
Before your travail on this earth is done.
Rest now, young brain, in tender brittle growth!
Be still, small hands, do not clutch for the wind!
Rest now, for many dreams will come with youth!
Be frugal with the life you have to spend!

8

I hope her world shall be Kentucky's hills
Where lazy clouds go rolling out to space;
I hope she'll love the smelly sawbriar tendrils
And wind from them to kiss her sunbrown face.
I hope she'll gather phlox beside the blue streams
That hummingbirds and butterflies are after;
I want this carefree world to hold her dreams
While she is young and filled with April laughter.
I hope she'll run barefooted with the wind
As sprightly as young percoon in the coves;
I hope that growing things impress her mind,
That growing, living things will be her loves.
I hope she'll love to touch a tree, a stone,
That she will know each wild flower in the wood
And love the music of the night wind's moan
And breathe Kentucky's wind and know life's good.

9

Soon as this autumn wind and rain subside
I'll walk through darkness under storm-drenched trees
Since thoughts stir in my brain I must confide
To earth and skies to put this heart at ease.
I'll hear fresh runlets singing with delight
Down slopes of rugged hills that cradled me;
I'll be kissed by the wet lips of night
While I think of her in her infancy
Cradled and pillowed down in sleep that breaks.
I'll wonder if dark hills will shut her in
Or if she'll find the rugged path that takes
Her out beyond these hills and moan of wind?
I know that over her are mountain skies
Around her are high hills in leafless wood;
I know her moods are wind and wild bird cries
And substance from these hills is in her blood.

Poem

We publish here "La Valse des Vingt Ans," in French, recognizing that any attempt at an English rendering would break the grave, heartbroken tenderness of its rhythm. We publish it here next to an American's poem of love and trust. It has a tragically different sound. In the last letter we received from France, before communications were interrupted entirely, our friends hoped that this voice in France, speaking their grief and their love, would reach America. They said, "Aragon speaks for us all."

Bon pour le vent bon pour la nuit bon pour le froid
Bon pour la marche et pour la boue et pour les balles
Bon pour la légende et pour le chemin de croix
Bon pour l'absence et les longs soirs drôle de bal
Où comme j'ai dansé petit tu danseras
Sur une partition d'orchestre inhumaine
Bon pour la peur pour la mitraille et pour les rats
Bon comme le bon pain bon comme la romaine

Mais voici se lever le soleil des conscrits
La valse des vingt ans tourne à travers Paris

Bon pour la gnole à l'aube et l'angoisse au créneau
Bon pour l'attente et la tempête et les patrouilles
Et bon pour le silence où montent les signaux
La jeunesse qui passe et le cœur qui se rouille
Bon pour l'amour et pour la mort bon pour l'oubli
Dans le manteau de pluie et d'ombre des batailles
Enfants-soldats roulés vivants sans autre lit
Que la fosse qu'on fit d'avance à votre taille

La valse des vingt ans traverse les bistros
Eclate comme un rire aux bouches du métro

O classes d'autrefois rêves évanouis
Quinze seize dix-sept écoutez Ils fredonnent
Comme nous cette rengaine et comme nous y
Croient et comme nous alors Le ciel leur pardonne
Préfèrent à leur vie un seul moment d'ivresse
Un moment de folie un moment de bonheur
Que savent-ils du monde et peut-être vivre est-ce
Tout simplement Maman mourir de très bonne heure

Bon par-ci bon par-là Bon bon bon Je pars mes
Chers amis Vingt ans Bon pour le service armé

Ah la valse commence et le danseur selon
La coutume achète aux camelots bruns des broches
Mais chante cette fois la fille à Madelon
J'ai quarante ans passés Leurs vingt ans me sont proches
Boulevard Saint-Germain et rue Saint-Honoré
Aux revers chamarrés de la classe quarante
Le mot Bon se répète en anglaise dorée
Je veux croire avec eux que la vie est marrante

J'oublierai j'oublierai j'oublierai j'oublierai
La valse des vingt ans m'entraîne J'oublierai
Ma quarantaine en l'an quarante

LOUIS ARAGON.

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A Handful of Musicians

Auric—Vines—Poulenc—Milhaud—Satie
Ravel — Falla — Stravinsky — Lourié

Raissa Maritain

IT WAS at Léon Bloy's, at Bourg-la-Reine and no longer at Montmartre, that we for the first time met Georges Auric. He must then have been about seventeen years old. Ricardo Viñes had brought this young prodigy of music to see the old lion, a young prodigy who was one of the greatest hopes of the famous "Six" group, of which Poulenc and Darius Milhaud were also members, Satie being the master and Jean Cocteau the theorist.

It was said of Auric, and without too much exaggeration, that he had "read everything," a feat which is somewhat unusual, even among musisians. He had carried his literary curiosity to the point of ploughing through, one summer, the entire correspondence of Mme de Sevigné. People used to tease him about it. And he would laugh his little, restrained, reserved laugh. But he had done something much better than this in his reading—he had read Léon Bloy, and young as he was, he had been able to appreciate the extraordinary importance of Bloy's teaching.

At the home of our godfather, with Georges Rouault, he was among the silent guests and friends who listened with profound respect to the words of this great master of meditation—words, moreover, infrequent, and uttered in the quietest of tones—but who said nothing about themselves, above all, nothing about their thoughts on art.

Apart from timidity, what still more increased young Auric's reserve was the seriousness and shyness which you might naturally expect to find in a budding genius—that "respect for persons" which is surely a virtue, and which led him to hide his opinions and his friendships as other men hide their faults.

A lively sympathy drew us to him, and he often came to see us at Versailles accompanied by Pierre van der Meer de Walcheren, a young Dutchman who was also a godson of Léon Bloy and who became and remained for us as dear as the most dearly beloved and closest of brothers. Already a celebrated novelist in his own country, he had turned to Catholicism several years after we did, and, like us, thanks to Bloy's writings. He has himself, in a very beautiful narrative, described his spiritual journey (*"Journal d'un Converti,"* Paris, 1921).

Together with him we spent hours listening to Georges Auric, who tirelessly deciphered entire scores on the piano. Thus one day he played through the whole of "Boris Godunov" for us, singing the opera from end to end and with impeccable accuracy, though in that strangled voice which seems to be characteristic of composers. (The only one I know who is an exception to this rule is Nicolas Nabokov.) We were all entranced with Musorgski, a happy enchantment from which one is never cured. We sang his melodies, the "Enfantines" and the rest. Here were hours both beautiful and unforgettable. As we stood around the piano, the singing and the laughter had the crystal resonance of joy undisturbed by anything.

The young composer's own works were dear to our hearts, and every time he played some new thing he had written we looked upon it as an event. How moved we were at the première of his ballet, "Les Fâcheux." It was a brilliant "first night" for the new music in general, and for Auric a great success. "Les Fâcheux," with settings by Braque, was presented by Diaghilev at the Ballet Russe the same evening as Poulenc's "Biches," with settings by Marie Laurencin. I don't remember that we had ever before quit our philosophical hermitage to attend the Ballet Russe. I have no idea whether that particular evening had some special quality over and above other evenings, but I could conceive of nothing more brilliant, more youthful, more exquisite, more "pure art" than was this spectacle. It was later that I came to know the wonders of Stravinsky, in "Petrouchka," in the monumental "Noces" and his other masterpieces—and later yet, Erik Satie's triumph with "Mercure."

The Ballet Russe likewise presented Georges Auric's "Les Matelots" and "La Pastorale." . . . The scores for this music—intelligent, fresh, of a slightly acid irony, wherein the French genius manifests itself under a new form, in reaction against impressionism (if not against Debussy, whose genius far surpasses academic pigeonholing, at least against his followers)—now lie sleeping in my home, far from here, with their inscriptions, precious bookmarks for rare pages of happiness.

In this reaction against impressionism the painters had long forestalled the musicians: the

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"Fauves" with Matisse, Derain, Rouault who was their friend; the Cubists with Braque, Picasso and Severini, who were then engaged in futurist experiments; and, before the surrealists, the first true "surrealist" Marc Chagall.

Jean Cocteau, who expressed in words the young musicians' new tendencies, organized the campaign which went so far as finally to wound even Debussy himself. Cocteau admitted this later on, and to a certain extent apologized for it in his "Letter to Jacques Maritain" (Paris, 1926). "To act and to revere are two different things. To my lively regret, I was forced in 1916 to pretend to attack Debussy. In reality I was attacking Debussyism. You can imagine what the impressionist musicians proceeded to do. They so slyly took advantage that Debussy suffered greatly the year he died. The present friendship of Louis Laloy for our group and for myself proves how much my attitude changes when an untainted mind takes the trouble to study it closely and attentively." Louis Laloy, a great friend and admirer of Debussy, could take that trouble, but not Claude Debussy himself. In fact it was Cocteau who, with the passage of time, learned better to appraise Debussy.

Erik Leslie Satie, approximately of the same age as Claude Debussy, whose friend for a time he was, and upon whom he at first even had a stimulating influence — Debussy orchestrated Satie's "Gymnopédies"—did not have as brilliant a career as the master of impressionism. His own special genius only began to be perceived by the new eyes—or rather the new ears—of the young musicians who introduced him to us. "In 1916," wrote Jean Cocteau, "Satie was our schoolmaster." This enthusiastic affection unfortunately did not last as long as the aged master lived. In 1925, the year of Satie's death, Darius Milhaud alone remained wholly faithful to him. The domineering glories of Stravinsky for a time eclipsed the marvelously rare, discreet, intellectual music of poor Leslie.

Our personal acquaintance with him began only at the time of his last illness, during his stay at the Saint Joseph Hospital, his last home in this world, whither another of our common friends, Pierre de Massot, had summoned Jacques, and during those last days the musician and the philosopher understood each other as though companions in mystery and became friends beyond death.

But we did go to the concerts given by the "Six," either at the Vieux Colombier Theater or at the hall on the Rue Huyghens, where Satie was often present. His eyes sparkled with spirit as did his speech, but in appearance he was humble, poor, almost self-effacing; his manner was prudent and circumspect, almost timid—timidly did he bring forth all his strokes of daring! He seemed to carry on his shoulders a long mysterious past of suffering and disillusionment. And he did not seem altogether sure that he had actually dedicated this posterity of disciples who at long last offered him veneration, these young people swarming about him, to his ideal of music. He who had done everything possible to shake off false friends and false admirers of his art in the end was astounded that he should be understood. In order to be more surely ignored by the false, he had adopted the disguise of a clown. To his compositions he attached such titles as these: "Pieces in the Shape of a Pear . . . Chapters Twisted in Every Direction . . . Cold Selections . . . Flabby Preludes for a Dog . . . " For future performers—if any—he supplied extravagant directions: "In a very special way . . . Don't get too excited . . . In the most profound silence . . . Don't go any higher . . . Alone for a moment . . . Open up your head . . . Put the sound under the sod. . . ."

All this merely repelled the public, who looked upon him as nothing more than a jester* and forgot that there were other titles in his works, bestowed without irony: "Parade," "Mercury," "Socrates," and later, "The Mass for the Poor." Such were the reward of those who, putting no value upon appearances, had been able to discover and love the poetic substance hidden under appearances.

Those were the days of the search for "purity" in art. Of course this did not mean moral purity. This search, ever since Mallarmé, had been growing in precision and in rigorousness. The artistic conscience was truly purifying itself, tending toward that "discovery of the spiritual in the sensible" which not only defines poetry but defines the soul of every art, painting as well as music and the theater.

During those years, between 1916 and 1925, no music could evoke the idea of "pure music" to the same extent as that written by Erik Satie. And it was "pure music" which preoccupied the Six, with Satie at their head. A music purified of rhetoric, of literature, of hollow tricks, freed of all eloquence except that which springs from simplicity, but from the most knowing simplicity, the simplicity of a fresh stream of water flowing through the hidden arteries of a most knowing, a most meditative, a most pondered art. Such a purity is certainly that which characterizes Satie's best compositions. It has not always been the purity of his disciples. The stumbling block of such rigorousness is an impoverished simplicity and a dried up purity. This youthful music has not always known how to avoid its stumbling block. It has not always understood that purity,

* "But the public at large saw in him something of the farceur," says the Encyclopedia Brittanica, basing itself, alas, on the opinion of a French critic, A. Coeuroy.

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in art as in morals, is not a negative quality, but the qualification of a reality.

However this may be, Cocteau, "together with a group of musicians and under Satie's patronage," had set himself the task of *disenchanting* French music. Who were the enchanters? Wagner. Claude Debussy. "Music was withering away under sorceries. Satie set the example of a musical saint. . . . We saw him substitute form for the reflections of form. . . ." (Cocteau's "Letter to Jacques Maritain"). Now how old was Cocteau at the time? He was twenty-four. Auric was eighteen. And, in 1916, Satie was fifty.

The deliverance of which Cocteau speaks is to be found in Satie's master works—"Mercury," "Socrates," "The Mass for the Poor." I never saw a performance of "Parade," a ballet based on a text by Cocteau, with settings by Picasso, which gave scandal when it was first produced. (Indeed a law suit followed, the trial of which achieved the ultimate in comicality. A certain musical critic by the name of Poueigh, having basely attacked this work, after, on the evening of the première, announcing that he was enthusiastic about it, Satie started to send him daily postcards as a punishment—insulting postcards, unscrupulously composed in terms of revolting obscenity. At the thought that his concierge was reading all this and spreading it around the neighborhood, M. Poueigh felt damaged; he brought an action against Satie. When the clerk of the court read the bill of particulars, torn as he was between his obligations to modesty and his obligations to truth, he ended by reading everything, substituting however for the more scandalous words the initial letter with which each of them begins. Whence there resulted an extraordinary procession of all the letters of the alphabet, set in a foil of brief and exasperatingly intimate phrases, the whole business setting the public into gales of laughter.)

Thus all I know about "Parade" is the score. But I recall our perfect joy the evening when Dieghilev presented "Mercury" at the Ballet Russe. Our friend Nicolas Nabokov, whose wonderful lyricism Paris was just beginning to admire, was with us. I cannot remember now whether we were at the Sarah Bernhardt Theater or at the Champs-Elysées. The house was jammed, filled to the eaves with an attentive and brilliant audience. What shone forth on the stage and among the spectators was not so much the brilliance of the settings, the costumes, the handsome raiment of those present, as an extraordinary joyfulness of the spirit. Here was a triumph of rare and genuine "pure art." It gently separated reason, imagination, feeling from all lees of crassness, harshness, and it made the hearts as bright as though they were diamonds. We were beholding a miracle. I marveled that it could last so long; at every moment I feared lest it dissolve like a dream for some brief instant sent from Heaven. The dancing, the lighting, Picasso's settings, Satie's music were so perfectly united and melted into a faultless harmony that only a single art seemed to be at play; or rather the music had absorbed everything; had transfigured everything into itself. Everything was music and music was everything. It was an art like Heaven, and that evening Satie was its god.

In "Socrates" we find another world: here the secret of Satie's soul appears. This work, of extraordinary beauty in sheer conception, is of central importance because it bears witness that with the straitest of means, but with means most faithfully and subtly loyal to a ceaselessly active intuition, a sacred lyricism can be achieved. Thus it is linked to the highest musical traditions: the counterfeit mysteries of "Parsifal" fall like a house of cards when confronted by these few moments of truth. Written in the Gregorian modes, "Socrates" treats as psalmody Plato's text on the death of the Greek philosopher. Its solemn, its deeply moving religious inspiration, expressed in the language of an impeccable musicality, reveals a little known Satie, who for once quit his extreme delicacy at the thought of opening his heart. That day he proved that the utmost purity in art, which we had supposed required extenuation of matter and of "subject," is able to support greatness of soul and spirit.

Nor is this an isolated example. Was not Manuel de Falla Satie's contemporary? And in Paris have we not often, between the two wars, fervently listened to the music of this great Spaniard, of this burning contemplative whose rigorous art so faithfully records his country's heart-springs?

Debussy. Satie. Ravel. Falla. Stravinsky. And now were being born Arthur Lourié's great compositions. The first we heard, the "Liturgical Sonata," was given at the Champs-Elysées by Straram, who was very fond of this young master. What a revelation of another fulness, of another rigorousness, of another "pure music," and, in this "Liturgical Sonata," of a spiritual inner urge so powerful that when he heard this work, Guy de Chaunac, a young painter of great talent, whose story perhaps I shall some day tell, began from that moment better to understand the meaning of his destiny. He became a friend of Maxime Jacob, one of Satie's disciples and a musician beloved of the angels, who today pursues his art in a Benedictine monastery. Chaunac himself soon followed suit. And surely he must remember that "Sonata" which, when he heard it one night in Paris, had its share in shaping his spiritual path. That work of splendid gravity, like some wondrous mourning, he told us had struck him because it was so filled with joy. . . . Lourié is closer to Falla

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than to Stravinsky, although he certainly learned something from the latter; but at the outset, while still very young, Lourié had learned the lesson of poetry through the works of Pushkin and Baudelaire and above all through Alexander Block, his elder and his friend.

★

What a wonderful garland! True tradition of fire in all the realms of the spirit. In unbelievable succession France brought forth her great painters, from Cézanne to Renoir, Van Gogh, Rousseau, Rouault, Picasso, Chagall, Matisse . . . to name only the older members of a generation inexhaustible in works of art, sensitive, rare, exquisite and often magnificent. You find therein a few foreign names? Yet those who bore them attest that the climate of France is needful to them. Days of sunshine! Great voices proclaimed truth; others uttered poetry both of time and of eternity: voice of Léon Bloy! of Claudel, Péguy, Bernanos, François Mauriac; of Francis Jammes, Max Jacob, Apollinaire, Reverdy, Eluard, Jules Supervielle! And I would also name, among those who were dear to us, the composer Maurice Jaubert, killed in 1940; Nicolas Nabokov, who is in the United States, as are Stravinsky, Arthur Lourié and Darius Milhaud; and also Roland-Manuel, Ravel's friend and historiographer, fervent admirer of Satie and Falla, and himself a musician of great talent, who is bound to us by so many memories and so much affection.

Strange years they were, which, between 1900 and 1940, witnessed in France the finest successes of thought and of art, and at the same time the worst failures in everything connected with the political management of the country! Days of sunshine in France! in that country which, like a climbing rose, endlessly flowered in all its branches, and which, in the twinkling of an eye, lost the soil of its substance.

Communications

WHY NOT THE VULGATE?

Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio.

TO the Editors: A publishers' news item recently stated that more Bibles, in more languages, are being published than ever before. The statement is very ironical to the student who tries to secure the text which was the standard Bible in Western Europe for more than 1300 years: Jerome's *Vulgate*.

Recently, away from books on the Rhode Island shore, I appealed to that tried and faithful collaborator in a pinch, Goodspeeds, in Boston, for any copy of the Vulgate that might be in their vast collection. I set no limit to size or price; it might be anything from a scrubby duodecimo to a fine folio of the seventeenth century. But they had no complete text of the Vulgate. I recall my difficulty many years ago in putting into the college library a copy of the Vulgate for my students to compare with the Anglo-Saxon and Wyclif texts. The only copy I could find was a scrubby affair, utterly unworthy the majesty of Jerome's periods.

I saw in the Vatican the first volumes of the new, critical edition of the Vulgate issuing from the Vatican Press. The volumes were in large quarto, half-vellum, heavy paper, wide margins, and type so large that the eye did not take in too much at a time. At ten dollars a volume, running into a score or more of volumes, the cost was unhappily beyond the means of an average professor or library. When I came back I took the liberty of suggesting to the authorities of the Catholic University, Washington, the desirability of publishing in this country in one volume this Vatican text, the fruit of hundreds of scholars working on hundreds of mss. and earlier printed texts over many years.

The suggestion was charitably acknowledged, but nothing has come of it. The fact still remains that with the Bible in a hundred languages distributed over the earth, the one version in the *lingua franca* of cultivated people in those languages, Jerome's version, the greatest single literary achievement in the history of the Bible, is practically unprocurable.

The question is not merely that of a prescribed text for the faithful of the Roman Church. The student of any modern literature, whatever his commitments or lack of them, cannot faithfully expound that literature without the Vulgate at hand. From Bede through Wyclif, from early vernacular versions in the south of France, Italy, Germany and Spain, the Vulgate must be reckoned with. There were, it is true, stray and incomplete mss. of the older *Itala* in England and Ireland, but Jerome's eloquent periods gave new life to the Bible, and many of those periods are more impressive today than those of any other version.

It is a mark of Professor Morison's keen literary and historical sense that he caps the chapters in his masterful biography of Columbus, "The Admiral . . .," with verses from the Vulgate. That was Columbus's treasured book; to ignore it is not to understand Columbus. The same may be said of many a work of art and literature. Ezekiel, Job, the Psalms—what conscientious student of literature ever failed to be arrested and have his imagination stirred by Jerome's vocabulary? Where did Jerome get those words? And why, with all the hagiologies and volumes in the *Patrologia Latina,* has no book ever been written explaining to the average reader the difficulties and problems faced and mastered by Saint Jerome?

Let us have the *complete* text of the Vulgate, with Apochryphas, a critical account of Jerome, and of the work of the Vatican Committee.

WM. PETER REEVES.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

Editors' Note: Feeling that readers of THE COMMONWEAL *would be interested in learning of the effect of the war on French publishing in Canada, we asked the directors of the Editions de l'Arbre publishing house in Montreal to write the following letter.*

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Montreal, P. Q.

TO the Editors: In March, 1941, there was published in Montreal a little book which was destined to attract wide attention. It was entitled "Crépuscule de la civilisation." This work by Jacques Maritain inaugurated a series of studies of contemporary problems and likewise was the first public appearance of the Editions de l'Arbre. It was not by chance that M. Maritain was the first writer chosen by us. For many years previous, the author of "Integral Humanism" and "Art and Scholasticism" had been generous in the encouragement which he gave to *La Relève,* the magazine which later branched out into our book publishing business.

Now more than two years have passed since the establishment of our house, and today we are generally ranked as the foremost publishers in Canada on the basis of the quality of our books. The Editions de l'Arbre has sought to remain faithful to the purposes which we set ourselves at the beginning—to allow young Canadian writers of talent to present their work to the public and to make their mark in literature. No publisher can boast so long a list of young people given their first opportunity in the short space of two years. Already three of these young writers have had their work receive awards from the government of the Province of Quebec.

But no publishing house can achieve prestige—the prestige with which it is able to help new authors—from a list made up entirely of unknown names. That is why we have deliberately sought to publish books of another kind also—books by well known writers and of first-rate importance. Here also we are proud of our list. And thanks to these celebrated writers, we have been able to organize throughout the world a system of business outlets which in turn has made possible a far wider public for our young Canadians.

The Editions de l'Arbre is governed by criteria on the spiritual as well as the artistic level in its choice of manuscripts. Without restricting ourselves to Catholic writers, we require from our authors a certain moral standard.

We have introduced into Canada many representatives of advanced thought. And since the task of a publisher consists not only in buying the output of well known men, which you can always do if you have enough money, but also in inducing new people to try their hands at literature, in 1940 the Editions de l'Arbre, before it had published a book, offered a substantial prize for a new novel.

The magazine from which our business developed continues to appear, but is now called *La Nouvelle Relève.* The word "new" was added to indicate a broadening of our field and a change, not in direction, but in technique.

Most of the writers whose books are published by the Editions de l'Arbre likewise contribute to our magazine. Here is a partial list: Jacques and Raïssa Maritain, Georges Bernanos, Yves Simon, Count Sforza, Luigi Sturzo, Henri Laugier, Gustave Cohen, H. A. Reinhold and all the young Canadian group who have been writing for us since the magazine was first established in 1934, and whose names are unhappily meaningless for your readers.

CLAUDE HURTUBISE.
ROBERT CHARBONNEAU.

The Stage & Screen

Another Love Story

SOMETIMES a weak play will give an imaginative actor a chance. Sometimes a good director can build a weak play into a production. Sometimes some small touch of technical invention (design, lighting) will justify two hours of outrageous boredom and offended taste. However, not one of these conjectures is the case at the Fulton at present. And the trouble is that I don't know exactly what the case is. I suppose it could go down as a just-post-first-world-war nightmare, except that I can't remember that far back. Anyway, to be brief, I will simply call it an oldfangled sex piece stretched into two interminable acts by Frederick Lonsdale, fatuously set by Raymond Sovey, weirdly dressed by Hattie Carnegie, and wandered through by a number of unhappy actors. Of course, there is Roland Young, and while it is almost impossible not to commiserate with his despair, I don't think one should. Sometimes it is better for a good actor not to act. *(At the Fulton.)*

KAPPO PHELAN.

Of the Same Name

MANY is the movie you have seen that bears the credit line, "Based on the book of the same name." It seems appropriate therefore to consider in this fall book number some of these books-into-movies. And no better film could be used to illustrate those that are referred to as "filmed books" than *"Jane Eyre"* which I have just seen and which is soon to be released.

"Jane Eyre" lines up with such motion pictures as "David Copperfield" and "Wuthering Heights." These are based on "classics" and readers come to them with set ideas and minds made up, so producers dare not tamper too much. And the result is usually not cinematic but bookish. William Goetz has given "Jane Eyre" a beautiful production; and Director Robert Stevenson steeped himself in the novel so as to guide his cast along themes that Charlotte Brontë had in mind. She would be pleased at this visualization of nineteenth century bigotry with emphasis on the narrow and sadistic Mr. Brocklehurst whose rigid punish-the-body-to-save-the-soul training made Jane rebellious to the system but even more adamant in her adherence to right. She would have been pleased at the film's romantically theatrical conception of Thornfield with its thick, damp walls, gloomy corridors, mad shrieks from the dark tower and the rolling mists on the Yorkshire moors that make this setting still more implacably mysterious. And I am sure Charlotte Brontë would be impressed with the people who portray her characters in this fanciful story. As the youthful Jane, subjected to the selfish meanness of her aunt (Agnes Moorehead) and the misguided religious fanaticism of Mr. Brocklehurst (Henry Daniell), Peggy Ann Garner performs with a sincerity that is strikingly effective. And as the grown-up

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Jane, the straightforward, honest but plain Miss Eyre who comes to Thornfield to be governess to Mr. Rochester's ward (Margaret O'Brien) and who stays to console and later fall in love with the strange, suffering master of this depressing manor, Joan Fontaine does a portrayal that is outstanding as a mirror of frankness of character and humble unadorned loveliness. Perhaps the film's greatest surprise to Charlotte Brontë would be Orson Welles's version of Edward Rochester. Instead of the gaunt, wracked-with-anguish, middle-aged man that has usually been visualized as the unhappy head of Thornfield, Welles makes him a healthy, rather robust and youngish Byronesque figure. No doubt that startled Miss Brontë would approve; for Orson Welles's rich voice and magnificant hamming of the rôle fit this romantic story perfectly. If the portrayer of Rochester took himself too seriously and avoided the ham entirely, this brooding character with a heart of gold beneath his rough exterior (not to speak of a demented wife in the attic and an illegitimate daughter) would turn out to be a not-too-funny joke.

But what Charlotte Brontë did not have in mind is that "Jane Eyre" would one day be material for the movies. And in spite of the good and faithful script that Aldous Huxley, Robert Stevenson and John Houseman have written from her book, they were still not able to make it a moving movie. It consists of a series of beautiful but static pictures. Fortunately we are spared shots of the insane wife. Most of the scenes show us carefully lighted and sombre sets and good photography of the principals talking. The most lively picture in this motionless film shows Orson Welles's cape waving madly in the breeze as he rides away over a wintry heath. "Jane Eyre" is a "filmed book." But for all its lack of cinema, I found it engrossing and wouldn't have missed a minute of its bookish, preposterous story or setting.

When a movie made from a book is called a "filmed book" its critics do not necessarily mean that it is not entertaining; they do, however, mean that it does not represent moving cinema at its best and that it is only a loan from another art. There are many examples of "filmed books" that are amusing or absorbing portraits of another time: "Pride and Prejudice" caught well the rustling silkiness of Jane Austen's comedy of manners; Orson Welles's production of "The Magnificent Ambersons" hardly moved at all, and yet its series of fine tableaux gave an impressive picture of a declining Indiana family at the turn of the century; "The Moon and Sixpence," in which George Sanders played the rôle suggested by the life of Gauguin, proved an interesting study of the character of an artist. Of course the themes of some novels are so moving that they make exceedingly interesting movie material for themselves: "The Grapes of Wrath," as a study of the Okies, and "The Ox-Bow Incident," as an anti-lynching tract, are good examples.

Since the beginning of this year we have seen a large number of films made from books: good, bad and indifferent films. Certainly among the latter were: "Presenting Lily Mars," loosely based on the Tarkington novel about a stage-struck girl but without any serious study: "Lady of Burlesque," based on Gypsy Rose Lee's "The G-String

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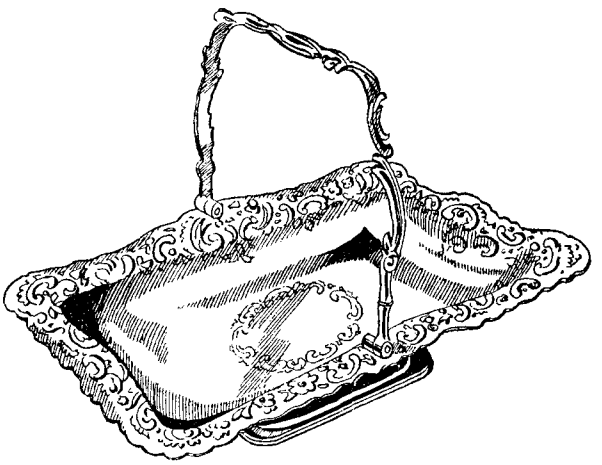

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Murders," gave a realistic view of back-stage life but botched up the mystery story. For me "The Constant Nymph" missed the boat entirely. I made the mistake of reading Margaret Kennedy's novel immediately before seeing this new film version, which failed to catch the spirit of the book and thwarted its purpose in casting middle-aged Charles Boyer in a rôle that demanded a young man. Only mildly successful were the movies made from Helen MacInnes's two thrillers, "Assignment in Brittany" and "Above Suspicion," and "First Comes Courage" (based on Elliott Arnold's "The Commandos"). Perhaps for these war-related melodramas we need less thrill and chase and more adherence to reality. All three of these novels made exciting reading, but too implausibly exciting cinema. That good movies can be made from books with war-related themes was shown with "The Moon Is Down" which John Steinbeck wrote as a novel and a play, but which found best expression in a third medium: the cinema.

The answer seems to be that film makers must employ the same imagination in making films from books as from original screenplays. Perhaps the popularity of a book frightens them. But with all the fuss and preconceived notions about "Gone With the Wind," David O. Selznick made a moving movie that was faithful to the story and still retained Margaret Mitchell's theme, the end of a civilization. More recently the makers of "For Whom the Bell Tolls" tried to repeat the success of the famous "G.W.T.W.," but the material in the Hemingway novel was not as adaptable to cinema as was the more dashing Mitchell piece; and the over-anxious producers turned out a long and well-photographed "filmed book" complete with Hemingway's characterizations, cave and sleeping bag, but without feeling for the motion picture medium. No matter for what reasons a studio quickly buys up a new book (the reason is usually its best-seller title), it is seldom that the book provides outstanding cinema material such as is found in original screenplays. What books made as good movies as originals like "Wake Island," "Yankee Doodle Dandy," "In Which We Serve" and "Shadow of a Doubt"? "The Human Comedy" was excellent cinema, but William Saroyan wrote this for the movies before the book came out, so it is by no means a book-into-movie.

And what of tomorrow's films? Everything between covers seems grist for Hollywood's mill, regardless of the type of book it may be. "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" has been snatched up and will no doubt be done right by because it is rapidly amassing thousands of readers. "Guadalcanal Diary" is finished and will soon be on the screens. The last Graham Greene thriller, "Ministry of Fear," and Mrs. Belloc Lowndes's "The Lodger" should soon be ready for release and with the right treatment could be first-rate chiller films. M-G-M is preparing a super production of "Quo Vadis?", the famous historical novel that was made into a movie when the industry was in its infancy Its harrowing episodes of the Christian martyrs should be as good film material now as they were back in 1913. But the bought-and-paid-for books about which we are most curious are those that seem most unlikely for motion pictures. What on earth will be done with "The Picture of Dorian Gray" which is soon going into production? And what kind of a movie can be made from the much-discussed "One World"? Will it become an illustrated lecture like Walt Disney's animated cartoon version of "Victory Through Air Power," the controversial de Seversky book; or will it be a fictionized propaganda piece like "Mission to Moscow"; or will it merely suggest background and themes as did the books that inspired "Hitler's Children" and "Behind the Rising Sun"? In any case Wendell Willkie has definitely stated that the film will not be released until after next year's Republican Convention election. Evidently he wants to play safe. But of all the recent purchases that make one wonder, the most startling is without doubt "The Screwtape Letters" by C. S. Lewis. This little book consists of a series of letters from one devil to another with discussions on the ways of God and man and how best to ensnare the latter. As cinema material it has unlimited possibilities. Then again, it could be just talky and static. Let us hope it and all the other valuable literary properties that have found their way to studios will be handled as intelligent, moving cinema. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Fall Books

UNDOUBTEDLY the war still casts its pall over attempts at really "creative" writing. Novels of poetic depth and feeling are scarce. "The White Shore of Olinda," by Sylvia Leao (Vanguard, $2.50), is an idyllic tale of simple fisher folk in Brazil, possibly the most appealing Latin American novel that has appeared in this country. "Out of the Silent Planet" by C. S. Lewis (Macmillan, $2.50), the author of the "Screwtape Letters," is reviewed elsewhere in this issue, as is Bucklin Moon's "The Darker Brother" (Doubleday, $2.50). Little, Brown is bringing out a special edition of the minor classic, "Quo Vadis" by Henryk Sienkiewicz ($3.00). One of the book club choices for the fall, "Indigo" by Christine Weston (Scribner, $2.50) is in tone strongly reminiscent of "A Passage to India." Once again the villain is white "superiority," and in this case it is an educated young Indian's discovery of the violence of this feeling that provides the punch.

Major Francis Gerard's "Malta Magnificent" (Whittlesey, $2.50) is a stirring account of the defense of the island fortress which held out as a key to control of the Mediterranean in the darker days of this war. The odds which this brave Christian community overcame are almost unbelievable, while the people themselves as the author paints them are as attractive as one could imagine. "Sword of Bone" by Captain Anthony Rhodes (Harcourt, $2.50) also deals with earlier days—the time and place of the French collapse. The author's reminiscences, highly personal, seem remote indeed. Captain Ralph Ingersoll's "The Battle Is the Pay-Off" (Harcourt, $2.00) is a much less subjective narrative; it is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. On the somewhat lighter side, though not amusing, is Etta Shiber's exciting "Paris Underground" (Scribner, $2.50). As a diagnosis of the

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origins and true character of the movement, "The Fruits of Fascism" by Herbert Matthews (Harcourt $3.00) is remarkably intelligent. His slant on its results is less enlightening, particularly as practically everyone seems to be against fascism now. But the best documented book in this general field this season is "The Spanish Labyrinth" by Gerald Brenan (Macmillan, $3.50). Here an English farmer who lived in Spain for many years, including those of the recent troubles, so carefully analyzes the various forces caught up in the terrible Civil War that he makes the heated pro-Franco or pro-Loyalist arguments which waxed so strong in the United States during those years sound woefully ignorant.

Richard Aldington's "The Duke" (Doubleday, $3.75) is one of the most brilliantly written biographies of the season. It is handsomely illustrated and includes graphic analyses of the Duke of Wellington's leading campaigns. "The Land of the Great Image" by Maurice Collis (Knopf, $3.00) is a colorful but objective account of the seventeenth century Portuguese Empire. It deals chiefly with the travels and adventures of an Augustinian friar and the conflict between the world views of Buddhism and Christianity. F. S. Crafford's "Jan Smuts" (Doubleday, $3.50) is a study of the great South African leader in two wars. Some light is cast upon the German question by the provocative "Lessons of My Life" (Knopf, $3.00) by The Right Honorable Lord Vansittart, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., D.Litt., LL.D., formerly English Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He holds that "Germans of the twentieth century are *more* ferocious than Germans of the nineteenth, eighteenth, seventeenth, sixteenth . . . ." For a picture of the man rather than for the development of his thought, Maisie Ward's "G. K. Chesterton" (Sheed and Ward, $4.50) is eminently successful. The subject is so good and so many absorbing personal minutiæ are adduced that the biography is highly readable withal its completely laudatory tone. "The Little Locksmith" (Coward-McCann, $2.50) is reviewed in this issue.

For charm and fascination it is hard to surpass David Fairchild's superbly illustrated "Garden Islands of the Great East" (Scribner, $3.75). Here is a veteran naturalist at his best. For entertainment George Sessions Perry's "Southwest Roundup" (Whittlesey, $3.00) supplies a varied fare: there are half a dozen excellent short stories, several novel excerpts of distinct color or flavor, and a competent little survey of contemporary writers in the great American Southwest. The only jarring note is supplied by Mabel Dodge Luhan writing about D. H. Lawrence. "Best American Short Stories—1943" edited by Martha Foley (Houghton, $2.75) is also a good job this year and recommended for general circulation.

There are two books by Jacques Maritain on subjects that are somewhat related. "Art and Poetry" (Philosophical, $1.75) is reviewed in this issue. "Education at the Crossroads" (Yale, $2.00) is a penetrating study of the whole basis of true education. It includes a program somewhat reminiscent of Cardinal Newman's "Idea of a University." "Life Together" by Wingfield Hope (Sheed, $2.50) presents Christian teaching on marriage in a sound and appealing light for the reader who has the interest and perseverance to continue beyond the very first chapters. "Outline History of the Church by Centuries" by Joseph McSorley, C.S.P. (Herder, $7.50) and "Principles for Peace" (Bruce, $7.50) are outstanding.

Two widely disparate visions of the post-war world: "Food and Farming in Post-War Europe" by Yates and Warriner (Oxford, $1.75) an extremely able and humane little compendium; "New World A-Coming" by Roi Ottley (Houghton, $3.00) a provocative presentation of the American Negro problem. "The Race Question and the Negro" by John La Farge, S.J. (Longmans, $2.50) is particularly good on this tough subject. Joel Seidman's "Union Rights and Union Duties" (Harcourt, $2.50) and Michael O'Shaughnessy's "Peace and Reconstruction" (Harper, $2.00) should be required reading for all those concerned about America's social problems.

One of the major publishing ventures of the fall is "Webster's Biographical Dictionary" (Merriam, $6.50). It contains no less than 40,000 names from every period and every clime and runs to 1,736 pages. The biographies are competent, succinct and remarkably informative for the space they cover. "Music Lovers Handbook" edited by Elie Seigmeister (Morrow, $4.00) is all that its title implies and it includes even the latest swingmasters.

Editors' Choice

TYL ULENSPIEGL. *Charles de Coster. Pantheon.* $3.50.

THE BATTLE IS THE PAY-OFF. *Captain Ralph Ingersoll. Harcourt.* $2.00.

ART AND POETRY. *Jacques Maritain. Philosophical.* $1.75.

Picaresque and Horror

JUSTICE demands that in reviewing the new Pantheon edition of "Tyl Ulenspiegl," admirably translated by Alan Ross Macdougall and illustrated by Frans Masereel (with a foreword by Camille Huysmans) tribute be paid to the publisher for producing a most handsome book at a price which sins against justice for the seller rather than for the buyer. It doesn't seem quite fair to sell the book so cheap. Of course it is a reprint—the first edition of this translation having been brought out expensively by the Limited Editions Club. But that still does not explain everything. Amateurs of handsome books owe Pantheon a vote of thanks.

What is "Tyl Ulenspiegl"? It first appeared in 1869, coincident with the creation of modern Belgium. Its author seems to have set about writing a national epic, and he succeeded very well in his task, for his book is a sort of Lowlands patriotic classic, and therefore has become part of the formative literature of modern Europe, with which we should be acquainted if we are to come anywhere near understanding what makes the modern European. From a literary point of view, the novel is a monster, but in places a charming monster. It combines a nineteenth century natural mysticism, in which the symbols of nature acquire a merely poetic supernaturalism, with the roguish adventures the Western World has come to associate with our more common or garden variety of

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Tyl—*à la* Strauss. It combines sheer fabliau story-telling with intense and passionate feeling against oppression. It combines lyric charm with a monstrous Flemish sense of humor (the jokes are as flat as they are broad) and with a disproportionate amount of detail on the methods devised by human beings to inflict pain upon their fellows in torture chamber and on scaffold.

The story takes place in the mid-sixteenth century, during the terrible days of Spanish oppression in the Low Countries and of revolt against that oppression under the leadership of William of Orange. The love of freedom is mixed with heresy, and heresy with the love of freedom, until the Church seems inextricably interlaced with tyranny, and Protestantism with liberty. It is, in fact, not a pleasant period for Catholics to contemplate. In his recent "Lettre aux Anglais," Georges Bernanos has a brilliant passage relating to this terrible portion of history: "Oh, English! Your desertion almost chained the Church to another kind of monster—Spanish clerical dictatorship, the black terror, all the cruelties and all the sadness of Hell, the hatred of men offered in homage to the God made Man, the blood of the sinner substituted in the ineffable chalice for the blood of the Lamb Who redeems him, Christ subject once more to the yoke of the Old Law."

Charles de Coster certainly does not go easy on the Church. There is really not a single sympathetic clergyman in all his pages, and most of the gentlemen of the cloth he depicts are unrelievedly bad. They are either grafters or sadists. Now anyone familiar with the documents of that day must know that the Church in the Low Countries was indeed venal, when it did not go in for "Spanish clericalism." But at the same time there must have been exceptions, as there always are exceptions, and one suspects that there must have been a good many exceptions, or else the vast bulk of Lowlanders would have become Protestants—which did not happen. What is more, there were plenty of Catholics to protest Spanish tyranny. And so "Tyl Ulenspiegl" must be accused of partisanship; the best one can say of it is that nowhere does the author sneer at Christian teaching, but rather he protests at perversions of Christian teaching.

A word has already been said about the great amount of torture in the book. It becomes terribly repellent. And if for no other reason than this, the novel is certainly not one to recommend for general reading except by tough-minded people, who have long since realized how nasty human beings can be. God forbid that any child should ever see this volume. A word of warning seems necessary since Tyl, on the surface, and without reference to this account of his exploits, is precisely the sort of fellow whom children love; here he remains a lovable chap, but the society in which he lives is so appalling that it makes his lovableness seem pure farce. With less justification, in its historic setting, may one criticize the anti-clericalism, although it unquestionably is overdone. To a reader who knows the background, makes the proper adjustments, "Tyl" can be useful as documentation for the European mind.

Dispatch from North Africa

RALPH INGERSOLL'S book hasn't lost anything by gathering dust on reviewer's shelves for several months so that it could be a November book club selection. His stories are just as good today and bear re-reading. His information about the army is equally useful for grasping the full import of war dispatches.

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And his concern over American complacency about winning the war is unfortunately more justified now than when he expressed it. "The Battle Is the Pay-Off" is as up-to-the-minute as the latest communiqué.

For a man who gave such intimate details about his differences with his draft board to the readers of *PM* Mr. Ingersoll has produced a remarkably objective and impersonal account of things. He does not leave his feelings out altogether, and there is no reason that he should, but objective reporting does comprise the great bulk of his remarks.

He has done a mighty good job in explaining in simple terms the organization of various army units, the importance and character of supply, the technique of finding sufficient drinking water, the ingredients of a C ration. When it comes to mortars, half-tracks, mine detectors and other implements he is even better, while the rôles of staff and weapons in attack get their due place. One of his most interesting observations deals with the spasmodic character of modern fighting, the long intervals of waiting and relaxing between moments of the most intense violence. Often there is a dive bomber making for you for an instant, or a few shells finding the range until the gun is silenced and then another welcome wait.

The climax, a twenty-four hour battle for the heights overlooking the road to Sfax, is as thrilling a narrative as anyone could want. The Rangers who attacked the heights from the rear were so efficient that despite two point-blank bayonet charges, it was six hours before they suffered their first casualty, a minor wound. Considering the fighting now raging in Italian mountain passes, this highly graphic account could hardly be more timely. Objective as it is, it makes clear how soldiers feel under fire.

Throughout the book are some of the true war stories that are passed about. Easily the best tells of a French soldier of 75 years of age who held up an American armored division by a "road block *symbolique.*" He had placed a three-foot rock in the middle of the road and stood armed with an 1870 French rifle. The old man said, "I represent the honor of the French army. It is not possible to permit the invasion of French soil without resistance . . ." When the commanding general assured him he had done his duty, the aged soldier insisted on helping to remove the rock.

After the battle the author has tacked on a few short chapters of general comment and advice to the over-optimistic American people. He is right, of course, although this commentary is out of character with the rest of his fine book. But his conclusions do include one real flash of insight: "A battle seems to me a conflict of wills to the death in the same way that a marriage of love is the identification of two human beings to the end of the creation of life. . . . Battles are commitments to cause death as marriages are commitments to create life. Whether, for any individual, either union results in death or the creation of new life, each risks it—and in the risk commits himself."

The Artist and God

IN "Art and Poetry" Jacques Maritain has now printed in English certain earlier writings on the relationship between art and God. You have to say it that way. Explicitly. It is not just a question of purity in art. ("Of this word itself an impure use has been made. It has become an equivocal word, dragged about everywhere. At the Marquis of Sade's, at the Tcheka, etc.") It is not

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just a question of morals. Nor is Maritain, the most sensitive of art critics, concerned here with appreciations of artists he admires. He analyzes the word of Rouault, Chagall, Severini and no one has ever made as clear the reasons for which they are important artists. He talks of Gide and Dostoievski. He goes very deeply into the world of music and is illuminating on the subject of Debussy, Satie, Lourié (who now works here in America). But he is not concerned with telling what these people have done, although what they have accomplished has been one of the major interests in his life. Primarily he explores the relationship between the autonomous creation of the artists and the universal creation of God. He wants to know what a saint would be who was a novelist, a painter, a musician. He wants to know whether a saint would have to give up his work as an artist. "Sainthood is not the negation of human life." He wants to know how an artist could become a saint. Does the artist's heroism, sacrifice and purity blind or bind him to God? Do not the virtues inherent and inevitable in an artist's concentration on his creation lead to metaphysics? Is not the artist compelled to know God?

With an inevitability which results from Maritain's faith and charity, the name of God is never absent from these pages on art. The name of God is in these pages naturally: it is naturally, without any self-consciousness, that the name of God is not avoided in these pages. Few men of our times, very few Catholics, know as Maritain knows the immense perils, the courage, the desperate risks which compose the climate of an artist's life. When Maritain speaks to the artist about God's creation he is not unaware of the artist's intense preoccupation with his own. When he speaks to an artist he speaks without wounding his dignity—knowing that dignity to be a high one, perhaps the highest one until one reaches the dignity of the saint. He knows that the dignity of the artist permits and even demands that in speaking to the artist one should speak also of God.

In France and throughout Europe the conversation between Maritain and the artist has been of extreme importance historically in the life of the artist and in the life of Catholic thought. It is important that this conversation in which the name of God is present should be pursued in America. For in America things have reached the point where we use the name of God with immense prudence, or in vain. We admit the name of God into our prayers, into personal morality, into a secret and closed world. We do not expect to find it outside that world. We do not admit it into polite conversation or into our clubs. Occasionally the name of God is ushered, as a guest, into some declaration or principle. Generally into the preamble. out of courtesy, as if it came from another world.

In theory we admit of course that these barriers we set up, these justifiable autonomies—the world of business, the world of war and peace, the world of science, the world of art—ultimately must be ineffective in resisting the presence of God. Everyone knows that the scientist, the mathematician, the artist, pursuing truth in the legitimate autonomy of his discipline enters finally into the realm of metaphysics. The different and ever varying paths along which men follow the search for truth converge ultimately in truth itself. But in practice we do not look ahead.

In practice we are embarrassed and this embarrassment about the name of God often has seemed insuperable. Maritain's "Art and Poetry" will encourage that freedom of thought which is not free unless it can think of God.

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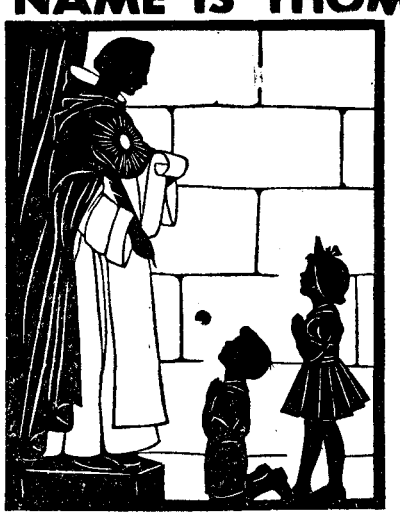

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More Books of the Week

My Days of Anger. James T. Farrell. Vanguard. $2.75.

WHEN YOU are living in a foreign country and you get a book from home you do not read that book in the way you would read it if you were at home. When you are living abroad America is something that stays still; it stays still in your memory; America is something that has had its chance, that has had its say, that has had its day in court. When people abroad ask you about America you tell them whatever you want to tell them about America. And America can do nothing about it: there are no American voices to protest. When you are abroad you carry an image of America in your heart. When you describe that image there is no interruption from those Americans who are not in your experience, not in your memory, not in your heart. Except, sometimes, when a book comes to you from America which does not merge with the image, which disturbs the image.

Put it at the worst. Suppose that you have been telling people abroad that America is Abraham Lincoln, Harvard College, the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Rio Grande, the Hudson, the plains, the mountains, the vertical cities, the immigrants from Europe living without hatred. No frontiers, a chance for all. Democracy. Suppose you have been running it all together to form a happy image of America. Even in good faith. The quiet countryside, the white spire of the colonial church, Whitman's camaraderie. Suppose then that a book by Mr. Farrell turns up and Mr. Farrell saying what about me and the boys who were boys with me in Chicago? While you are so pleasantly engaged telling the French, the British, the Italians, the Swiss about America, tell them about Studs Lonigan. And how about telling yourself?

I read "Studs Lonigan" abroad and because you don't get many American books abroad—they cost too much—that particular voice from America, claiming to be included in the picture I carried about with me of America, made a very deep impression. I have never been able to get rid of Studs.

When you are living in America there are a great many novels being published all the time and you can pick and choose. You don't have to read unpleasant books. You don't have to read about Danny O'Neill in Mr. Farrell's latest novel "My Days of Anger." You don't, but I do. Because of Studs. When a novelist has managed to force a character down one's throat in such a way that through some physiological process the character has become part of one's blood and mind, that novelist has earned the right to present other characters. No objections of taste or choice are valid. The fact that Mr. Farrell's novels are "realistic" novels does not alter the fact that his evidence is real evidence. The fact that there are many beautiful things in the world does not alter the fact that there are many painful things in the world.

"My Days of Anger" contains sordid and brutal scenes meticulously described. It contains very coarse language. As the reader will gather from any review of this book in any paper, Catholic or not, its place is on the reserved list. I say this in order to be entirely explicit. Most people know already what Mr. Farrell's writing is like. I do not propose to review the book in detail. Studs Lonigan drifted sadly into the gutter. Danny O'Neill fights back. He loses his faith: "There is no God." But he does not lose his courage or—and this is something new in Mr.

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Farrell's heroes—his mind and will. Danny *thinks,* chooses an objective, fights to attain it. Again and again he fails but, although he has rejected God, he has not rejected the instruments through which God may reach him. In no previous volume has Mr. Farrell kept so clearly defined certain regions of purity and honesty. Never has he developed a character so persistently aware of them.

We always build for ourselves a country with frontiers against grief, but grief has always its passport in perfect order. That is in our personal lives. In our reading it becomes a question of just how much one can manage. It becomes a question of just how much evidence of sadness, disaster and courage we are able to admit into our minds and manage in our minds. It becomes a question of generosity and prudence. The park benches, the bordels, the drinking, the fighting, the arguing that surrounded the life of an imaginary character in Chicago between 1924 and 1927, is there any necessity, any compulsion that these should be granted admittance to our minds? The necessity is measured by the depth of our heart and our faith.

But it's not quite fair to talk about an imaginary character. A novelist says something by means of imaginary characters. Mr. Farrell is saying something about life in America, life in Chicago, life among Americans of Irish descent in Chicago, life among boys who have been to Catholic schools in Chicago. He is saying what he means to say. And it's not quite fair to talk about Mr. Farrell's books as if they concerned entirely the Chicago scene. Mr. Farrell is saying something about youth, about sin, about ignorance, about faith. No matter with what anger. He is talking about something we all have known. If the evidence he presents of the distress of these human souls were faked, no question, of course, would arise. But the evidence is not faked. Because if it were faked Mr. Farrell could write volume after volume—as he does—and neither Studs Lonigan nor Danny O'Neill would have any life at all. The question would not arise as to whether or not we should allow them to speak with us, as to whether or not we should allow them to ask their dreadful questions of our conscience. But that question does arise; it remains insistent. It remains a question of generosity, compassion and prudence. C. G. PAULDING.

Out of the Silent Planet. C. S. Lewis. Macmillan. $2.00.

READERS with palates have had an exceptional pleasure this year in the sudden success of C. S. Lewis, a literary don of Magdalen College, Oxford. His remarkable "Screwtape Letters" has been a secret best seller in the religious field ever since last spring; now comes an other-world fantasy in the tradition of H. G. Wells but with a fable quite its own. What is the just word for Mr. Lewis's attractive appeal: zest? tang? bouquet? To me he is to this year's reading what Major Grey used to be on the pantry shelf, when chutney was still available. This is the story of a Cambridge philologist who is kidnapped into a sky-ship and taken, for sinister reasons, to the planet Mars—which its own inhabitants call Malacandra. How he finds there three quite different races of creatures living on comfortable terms, how he learns that Mars is less warlike than Earth, how his courage and intuition are quickened by the strange adventure, are in the best vein of this always enchanting genre. Lewis's interest is not as much in science or economics as was Mr. Wells's in his famous fantasies. His concern is spiritual and philosophic; there is just enough

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ethics and not too much; just enough story and not too much. He has moved onto one of the most honored and exclusive shelves of literary achievement, and done it with equal humor and wisdom. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

The Darker Brother. Bucklin Moon. Doubleday. $2.50.

HARLEM is a place. It is easily locatable in New York City. It is a black, vibrant, pulsating, colorful, fabulous, blatantly melodic island of joy, despair and aspiration. To romantic, jaded and rich whites it is a place of curious night life. It is stomping and boogie woogie. It is jam sessions at three in the morning, when primitive Negro rhythms plangently wail, flowing curiously beneath and above and around some latest song to stir lethargic blood. It is dark rooms—a single spotlight on a short, dark girl whose arms and legs beat time to half-hidden drums, while her lidded eyes are closed as she mystically dreams in undulant motion.

But Harlem is more than that. It is a slum surrounded by splendor. Almost a million Negroes inhabit it. From its squalor, its backyards and open fences these people look with intense and vivid eyes into the "tyranny of white faces"; into the kind of world they merely want to share.

It is more than that. It is a place that sprouts a multiplicity of religions, orthodox and strange. It is a place where Father Divine is "God"—and Joe Louis is worshiped as we would worship men who give us pride. It is a place of exploitation, of wretched squalor, of "mugging" and of petty crime. It is a place where a few are rich, and sport their richness in flamboyant color.

It is a place where resentments accumulate and burn deep—and die again when men and women become "slum slugged." But it is a place where the Negroes have become unusually aware of the inequalities that an alleged democracy imposes on them, and where this awareness has been sharpened and intensified by the overt declarations of the things for which we fight.

This is the place in which Mr. Moon has chosen to set down his characters in this tough novel. Mostly it is a story about a young boy who is brought to Harlem from the South. It is a story of his growth and of his love. It is the story of his thwarted aspirations. It is the story of the slow disintegration of character retreating before economic and social discrimination.

Mr. Moon has two special talents as a novelist. The first is the ability to create young people whose aims, motives and half articulate aspirations you believe. The second is a good ear. Some of his dialogue, the idiom of current speech, is so good that he makes you know that you are overhearing speech rather than reading it. As speech no single word of it is false.

As a result the sense of frustration, the psychological implications of being an alien people in a world that pretends to the contrary is greatly realized. Terror surrounds these Negro people—the terror of insecurity. And it beats in their minds with the beat of their pulse. And with marvelous ability Mr. Moon makes it beat in yours. To this state of mind (which John Adams said was revolution) of the Negro in American life, civilian or martial, this novel will bring you shocked knowledge.

Yet, I think, the book, like an ambitious shortstop, tries to cover too much ground. The story of Rafe and the policy numbers could easily have been a novel in itself. Some of the action lays heavy tribute on my credulity. I find it difficult to accept the lynched body which Slick sees as more than the lazy rationalization of a tough kid. The moral lapse of Birdie, as faithful and lovable a

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woman as I have met in fiction, I can scarcely credit as the result of economic pressures.

But for the rest it is a strong, live novel filled with speed and sincerity and good writing. I hope that all those people who make generalized and hysterical conclusions about riots in New York and in Detroit will let this literary bombshell disturb the prejudices that monstrously spawn at the top of their minds. FRANCIS DOWNING.

Thunderhead. Mary O'Hara. Lippincott. $2.75.

MOST American city boys can't tell a horse's withers from a zither, but since all American boys are hardened addicts of the movie "Westerns," they would naturally fight the varmint who dared to imply that they were not, one and all, excellent judges of horseflesh. And so I too, who couldn't give you the distinction between a fetlock and a hammerlock, feel not the slightest compunction in doing a review of "Thunderhead," by Mary O'Hara, author of the widely and loudly acclaimed equine classic, "My Friend Flicka." After all, wasn't I at one time the most loyal and attentive student of the great William S. Hart? And in addition I have the advantage of having once attended a houseparty that started off with two full days of watching a horse show, after which, out of sheer frustration, I went off and broke an arm trying to execute a fancy dive.

Apologies to Miss O'Hara. This undignified introduction is quite out of order in discussing a book as seriously fine as "Thunderhead." Sequels to good novels usually add up to one long anti-climax, but Orville Prescott seems to think that "Thunderhead," which concerns a remarkable colt of the famous Flicka, is almost as good as his mother. Not having read "My Friend Flicka," I can't tell, although offhand it would seem rash to say about Miss O'Hara's latest the wildly enthusiastic things that conservatives like Lewis Gannett and Ralph Thompson said about its predecessor.

Nevertheless, "Thunderhead" is still first-rate stuff for all those who thrill to the sight and sound of flying hoofs, the whiff of stable hay and the call of the wild. It is not enough to say that Miss O'Hara knows all about horses. She also knows horses as one knows intimate friends, and what is more, she understands them. Being an excellent novelist, she has the further ability of projecting the personality of her horses on the printed page in a style that is much more vivid than most novelists manage to achieve with human beings.

But Miss O'Hara has other virtues. She can do as well with the human animal as she does with the equine, and most extraordinary of all, she brings to her work—right into the heart of it—a set of values that are for the most part highly Christian.

Miss O'Hara is the daughter of an Episcopalian minister. Apparently the early indoctrination took, for we now have the striking spectacle of a successful American writer whose characters talk—and talk very eloquently—about such things as God, prayer, immortality, fortitude and the idea of life not as a pursuit of temporal happiness, but as the pursuit of eternal salvation. All this is something new in popular American letters.

Perhaps it is because Miss O'Hara is so remarkably Christian in her viewpoint that the reader is struck by one discordant note. In the story a mainspring of the action is a rancher's failure; his wife, who obviously speaks for the author, suffers from an almost morbid terror of poverty. JOHN C. CORT.

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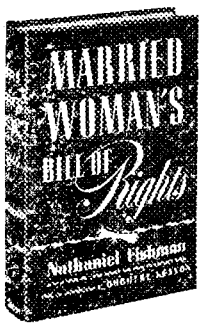

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Meet Mr. Blank, the Leader of Tomorrow's Germans. R. G. Waldeck. Putnam. $2.50.

WHO WILL be the leader of Germany the morning after Hitler? This is the question set forth by R. G. Waldeck—introduced as "Countess Waldeck" on the book-jacket. She calls the man she is looking for "Mr. Blank"—which seems a suitable name for a faceless form. The author surveys the German political groups from the monarchists to the communists in her search for the right candidate and examines the faces of many more or less prominent persons she has met at one time or another.

Though written in the light vein of *kaffeeklatsch* conversations, this is a serious book, facing a most delicate problem with considerable knowledge and a good deal of common sense. Most previous books on Germany's future are dogmatic and partial—written by the same clique that now attacks the author because she disagrees so with its wishful thinking. Countess Waldeck, who came to this country as a voluntary immigrant two years before Hitler became chancellor of the Reich, says frankly that "it would be sheer madness to try to build a post-Hitlerian government around a refugee politician." She claims that over 90 percent of the German emigration is Jewish, while the Jews formed less than 1 percent of the German population. She declares that refugees are not popular with the Germans at home who will prefer leaders who have shared with them the experiences and disillusionments of the nazi régime. If refugee politicians were to take over after Hitler's downfall, the German people would always feel sold out to the victors and the dead Hitler would become a most dangerous myth. These are bitter arguments for those stranded refugees who are dreaming night and day of their happy return into the positions they left nearly a decade ago.

There is only one refugee politician whom the author would consider "smart": Dr. Karl Spiecker, 55 years old, a prominent Catholic politician and the nazis' enemy number one as the leader of the *Deutsche Freiheitspartei* and the chief speaker of the *Deutschen Freiheitssender,* the first illegal anti-nazi radio station.

Though there is some truth in the author's attitude towards the possibility of refugees taking over the Fourth Reich, her view of potential candidates is hardly just. Bruening is not half so austere a person as the Countess describes him. Still more inadequate is the portrait of Rauschning and the verdict that "to groom this conservative refugee as Mr. Blank would be about the same as putting over the Mayor of Juneau, Alaska, as President of the United States." This is a silly argument. Mr. Rauschning was President of the Senate and the independent city of Danzig, controlled by the League of Nations, and therefore a person of international reputation. Indeed Danzig was a leading bone of contention between Germany and Poland. Besides this Rauschning is well known to the German intelligentsia. His "Revolution of Nihilism" was the most sensational book on Germany before the outbreak of the Second World War—it was smuggled from friend to friend by anti-nazis and even by nazis—and had a considerable effect in strengthening anti-nazi sentiment in the Conservative ranks.

On the other hand the author overdoes the possibility that nazi turncoats might be helpful. That she expects Goering, "the best mannered hand-kisser," to make a better Fouché than Fouché himself seems an unsound judgment, as his love for pomp and possessions which impressed simple people before the war will certainly

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make this war profiteer detested in the hour of German catastrophe.

The author's chapter on the German generals is sound and informative. Much weaker is her chapter on the German bureaucrats, whose lack of personality she scorns as she does "not know of one case on record where a high German official resigns who would not have been dismissed anyway." This is regrettable ignorance. I happen to know several men who did so—including the Wilhelmstrasse's most intelligent ambassador who resigned in 1934 because he was convinced that Hitler's foreign policy would inevitably lead to disaster.

The chapter on the church leaders is excellent. The author gives a very fine characterization of Cardinal Faulhaber and a sound report on the Church's fight against Hitler's neo-paganism, which earned the Catholic minority much credit with the front of decent people. "The Germans love these heroic Catholics. There is no doubt that they are destined to be the most important factors in the reconstruction of post-war Germany." MAX FISCHER.

Saint John Capistran, Reformer. John Hofer. Herder. $4.00.

THIS is a translation by Father Patrick Cummins, O.S.B., of "Johannes von Capestrano, Ein Leben im Kampf um die Reforme der Kirche" which appeared several years ago. The translator says in his preface, "Hofer, having by long and careful search discovered a surprising number of significant details, is able to follow Capistran year by year on all his ways. The German original, to which I refer professional historians, is fully documented. The translation retains only such notes as may interest the general reader. Substantial identity with the original has been my aim. Some unimportant details I have omitted. And I have simplified the author's stylistic diffusiveness. I have also omitted the citations for many quoted passages which were obtained from unpublished manuscript sources." The question in the reviewer's mind is, would it not have been better either to retain the notes and citations, thus making the entire work available to the student, or to write a fresh biography based on Hofer's. In the days when German scholars were first impressing the world with their proficiency in research, there used to be a saying that it took a German to study history and a Frenchman to write it. Judging by the translator's racy idiom, he might have written a biography in modern fashion, one in which the subject stood out in high relief, as do Catherine of Siena in Edmund Gardner's "Life" and Saint John of the Cross in Father Bruno's. In the present volume, Capistran is lost in a maze of minutiae, until at last, by laborious plodding on the reader's part, and the saint's own powers of attraction, he emerges a live human being whom one knows better, perhaps, for having learned so many relevant but uninteresting facts.

As is well known, John of Capistrano was born in the Abruzzi in 1386, the son of a follower of Louis of Anjou. He studied law under Peter Ubaldi at Perugia, where, close to Assisi, he naturally saw much of the Franciscans. He became counselor at the royal court of Naples, where, in spite of his learning, he amused himself with dancing and almost foppish attention to the grooming of his small person. Appointed judge by King Ladislaus of Naples, he was stationed in Perugia when the city came under that monarch's rule. When sent in 1415 to meet Malatesta and arrange for peace between him and Perugia, he

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was apprehended and imprisoned. During his captivity, he decided to become a Franciscan. He received the habit October 4, 1415. Due to the influence of Saint Bernardine of Siena, he became one of the mightiest itinerant preachers of whom the Observants could boast. (The Franciscans who wished to observe the original Rule rather than to modify its interpretation as did the Conventuals were known as Observants.) Capistran founded numerous Observant communities, and was intrusted by the Holy See with many missions to warring cities and countries, thus visiting Milan, Venice, Burgundy, Austria, Germany, Bohemia and Hungary. He had a long controversy with the Hussites, notably with Rokytzana of Prague. When the Turks invaded Hungary in 1456, seventy-year-old Capistran helped to raise a motley army of crusaders, led these zealous followers into Belgrade and, Hofer believes, must be credited even more than Hunyadi with the successful issue there. Capistran died, as did Hunyadi, of the pestilence that raged after that battle. He was not canonized until 1690, although he had been deeply revered during his lifetime by the Observants, and was the trusted friend of several popes. Hofer's discussion of the delay in the process is enlightening.

Hofer's effort to be fair is exemplary: he never fails to remind the reader that Capistran was primarily a jurist, a tireless reformer of his Order, a fearless advocate for it with the Holy See, but he points out Capistran's shortcomings, also. The reader is kept aware that, as the translator phrases it, "a saint, while he transcends the moral defects of his age, does not transcend its intellectual limitations." He explains in great detail Capistran's attitude to the Jews, telling his horror of usury. The fact that the Jews were money lenders to princes gave them undue power in many instances, and there was perhaps some justification for Capistran's severity in their regard. Hofer is fair to the Conventuals, although his sympathy with the Observants is evident throughout his accounts of the disputes that disturbed the Order. He sums up various series of sermons delivered by Capistran at Nuremberg, Vienna and elsewhere, and frequently quotes his sermon notes or notes taken by listeners. He is particularly fortunate in his choice of quotations from Capistran's letters, and in portraying his spiritual life and teaching.

For all one may be irked by wearisome paragraphs, there are several exciting chapters, notably those on the battle on the Danube and the siege of Belgrade: reading these, one recalls that Joan of Arc and the fiery little friar were contemporaries, although Joan was many years his junior. Toward the end of the volume one has a good picture of a real saint, zealous, almost headlong, typically Italian, an ardent supporter of the papacy, a veritable warrior against vice and heresy, and a scrupulous follower of il Poverello.

D. H. MOSELEY.

The Little Locksmith. Katharine Butler Hathaway. Coward-McCann. $2.50.

FOR TEN YEARS she lay strapped to a board with her chin in a harness and yet it was not by any means an unhappy childhood. The little girl lived in an imaginative world while her fingers became so adept in fashioning minuscule toys and her mind so quickened for new games and stories that her bed was the center of interest to her brothers and sister. It was when she was fifteen and learned to walk again, seeing her oversmall body in the glass, that her deformity gave her punishment. She felt herself spiritually shackled to the little humpbacked

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locksmith whom she had watched at work in her nursery.

The book left behind her by Katharine Butler Hathaway is the analysis of a brilliant mind in a dwarfed body; a mind which could probe itself with the finest of needles and record its findings in prose so sensitive that it is a cobweb of delicate yet clear design—an intellectual's map of the cripple's battlefront area. It was not physical pain that was Katharine Butler's enemy but the realization of the barrier between herself and normal girlhood; her mother's sheltering devotion making it too clear that for her daughter, life must be as sexless as it was aloof. Only in her passion for writing did Katharine find any alleviation for her sense of solitariness although, during her years as a special student at Radcliffe, she found herself again the center of young people who ignored her handicap. But the close of college broke this anchorage and tossed her into a nervous breakdown. Not until she began to repeat to herself, "God within me," could she brave the outside world. She was thirty-four when life really began for her, when she bought a fine old house in Castine, Maine, and determined to find vicarious happiness as an ideal aunt to her nephews and nieces. But more happened in Castine than is written in this book. Mrs. Hathaway had been married for ten years when she died in Salem just after the publication of her autobiography in the *Atlantic Monthly*.

"In the beginning I said to myself, this book is going to be a bread and butter letter to God. I was ashamed to be saying anything about God seriously." "My generation," she adds, "was too bright to know God and too clever to kneel down. . . . Shockingly arrogant ill-bred guests, we took what we wanted, if we could get it, whether it was offered to us or not and we forgot to guard our happiness with humility and prayer." Prayer, she decided, is the natural expression of those not so stupid or so rude as to have forgotten that they are guests. Katharine Butler had escaped from the fetters of the little locksmith before her romance. She rebuilt her own life while she was restoring room by room her old house. Castine becomes another Avalon. The high green wind-swept peninsula with its strong fir forests, deep-blue rivers and the white village and church steeple seen across the shimmering harbor, stand out in bright brilliance behind a story of suffering guided to exquisite achievement.

E. V. R. WYATT.

The Case for Mrs. Surratt. Helen Jones Campbell. Putnam. $3.00.

THIS BOOK gives in considerable detail the historical data associated with the trial of Mrs. Surratt for her alleged participation in the assassination of Lincoln. Mrs. Surratt was arrested without any valid reason; she was kept in a filthy cell with no recourse to legal counsel; she was tried before a military commission which had no constitutional right to function in the District of Columbia; the evidence was plainly perjury as offered and would not have been accepted in any civil court worthy of the name; Secretary of War Stanton, the instigator of the prosecution, must have known that she was innocent and therefore for all practical purposes was a murderer; her judges on the military tribunal were examples of military intolerance at its worst, altogether unconcerned with the truth; President Johnson, like Pilate, refused to concern himself with the truth. The hanging of Mrs. Surratt is a warning as to what may happen where the army takes broad precedence over the civil court. PAUL KINIERY.

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"When Goering's Luftwaffe dumped infernos on London night after night in 1940's autumn blitz, there were many ambulance squads manned by civilian volunteers. This is a fine story of one such unit—four people: a dancer, an architect, a workman and a business man. Author was a member of A.R.P. squad. Plenty of solid character writing. A good war novel intelligently set down."—Phila. Evening Bulletin. $2.50

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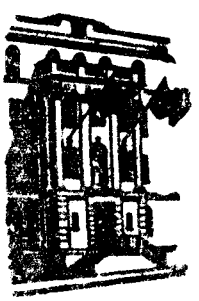

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The Inner Forum

Book Reviewing in the Diocesan Press

IT SHOULD NOT be necessary to argue for a lively, vigorous book page in every large diocesan paper in the United States. The times simply demand that our Catholic press become more conscious of the tremendous influence wielded by books. For one thing, there has never been a period in our history when so many people have been reading books. Libraries and publishing houses protest they cannot keep up with their readers' requests. For another thing, the utter confusion characterizing today the whole field of literature regarding faith and morals is in itself the strongest kind of challenge to our Catholic press.

The Catholic press, which became greatly exercised, and rightly so, over the quality of motion pictures some years back, has as grave an obligation to become concerned with the type of literature their readers are being exposed to. It will not do to withdraw from the scene and profess to take no notice of current best sellers. Our Catholic people are reading these books. Not one out of ten thousand is going to read "The Our Father According to Saint Teresa of Avila," but a great many of them will be reading "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn." For this reason we should have in our Catholic papers a bright, readable book section.

Perhaps the finest bit of book reviewing appearing in any Catholic diocesan paper in the United States is that turned out by Father John Kennedy of the Hartford *Transcript* in his weekly column, "Balancing the Books." His style has urbanity and a crispness that makes him very readable. Were his type of review to be more widely emulated, it is almost certain that a great deal of the nonsense and downright ignorance found among many Catholics concerning books of the hour would be checked.

A year ago *The Tidings,* now under my editorship, official Archdiocesan paper of Los Angeles, inaugurated a weekly book page. It will not do to say that this feature has been a rousing success. It hasn't, but it has represented an attempt to cover as nearly as possible the currently popular books in the field of fiction, travel, politics and religion.

It is all very well to encourage the reading of such books as "The Dialogue of Saint Catherine," but how many readers are going to choose that type of book when they settle back for an evening of reading? One must be a realist and acknowledge that books of the hour, many of them ephemeral, will be preferred by the larger class of American readers.

On our book page we have striven to review the most significant Catholic books. We have endeavored also to present in a weekly column by Tom Neal "Books and Backgrounds," pieces about books and authors of the past, and this has elicited a very favorable reader response. Another interesting feature appearing on our book page is the poetry section edited by James L. Duff, himself a fine poet. For our poetry selections, solicited from all parts of the country, we have paid standard rates. There will shortly appear a little volume containing the best poems which have appeared on the book page of *The Tidings*

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during the past year, and it may then be seen what a precious harvest has been gleaned by Mr. Duff.

Good reviewers are hard to find. There is a knack which is not easy to acquire of exposing the theme of a book at once and discussing briefly the treatment of that theme, for its excellence and its shortcomings. The general tendency for reviewers is to become windy and more interested in saying pretty or clever things than in discussing the book itself.

It is a mistake to give too much space to some of the books which come off our Catholic presses, simply because they are not particularly readable. By and large, too, many spiritual books are above the heads of Catholic readers. This is not said in disparagement, it is only said because the tempo of American life is so hurried that the repose and quiet necessary for reading solidly spiritual works is rarely available. Specialized books of no general interest should also be avoided, because the whole character of the page should be constructed so as to appeal to the widest possible number of readers. People are generally most interested in biography, travel books, personal reminiscences, essays and stimulating apologetic works.

The biggest difficulty with running an attractive weekly book page will be in sustaining it over the long run. Enthusiasm is always great at the start of a new venture, but it has a way of petering out as time goes on. It is necessary to develop some long-range plan whereby books are placed in the hands of reviewers in plenty of time for them to prepare their comments. It will be surprising how many good local reviewers you will uncover as time goes on; this is one of the rewards of a local book page. Interest is stimulated, critical thought is stimulated. In a few years one can surround a diocesan book page with a nucleus of intelligent, enthusiastic Catholic men and women. The talent is there. It only needs to be encouraged.

The book page in *The Tidings* is still developing, and while we have not been able to realize that complete freshness which should characterize everything impregnated with Catholic thought, we feel we have made a start and have dedicated ourselves to the work of making Catholic thought felt not only in the field of Catholic books themselves, but also in that wider field of reading which all too often escapes intelligent Catholic criticism.

THOMAS J. MC CARTHY.

CONTRIBUTORS

Jesse STUART has just won the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Award. His latest book, to be published later this fall, "Taps for Private Tussie," is the December choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

Louis ARAGON is a French novelist, poet and essayist. A volume of his poems, smuggled out of France, has just been published by Pantheon Books, New York, under the title "Le Crève-Coeur."

Raissa MARITAIN'S latest work is an essay on Chagall. She is preparing for publication a second volue of her memoirs.

Christopher MORLEY, critic, essayist and novelist, has written, among many other books, "Kitty Foyle" and "Thorofare."

Francis DOWNING is an educational director for the United Auto Workers in Detroit.

Max FISCHER is a European journalist, now living in New York.

D. H. MOSELEY frequently reviews books for THE COMMONWEAL.

E. V. R. WYATT is drama critic for the *Catholic World*.

Paul KINIERY teaches in the Graduate School of Loyola University, Chicago.

Rev. Thomas J. McCARTHY is editor of *The Tidings*, Los Angeles diocesan paper. His article was written at our request.

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